

A WHIP for the
Meal-Men, Fore-stallers and Reqraters :

O R,

A Reason of the present Dearth of CORN.

By a Person Skill'd in Husbandry.

GOD brought the Children of *Israel* out of Bondage, and gave them Food by Raining down *Manna* from Heaven for Bread for them; and *Moses* so ordered the gathering thereof, that the Rich could not deceive the Poor.

God hath freed our Land from the fear of Bondage, and hath given us Peace, and a great Plenty of Corn, whereby the Poor as well as the Rich might live comfortably. And our Ancestors made good Laws for that purpose; but for want of being put in Execution, the Poor are not benefited thereby.

All Nations of what Religion soever, have Laws to provide for the Poor, thereby to keep them from Begging, or stealing; and we know that want often times forces them to the one or the other, to keep their Families from starving; our Laws commanding such as Beg to be Whip'd, and such as do Rob to be Hanged, which should cause our Magistrates to take care to keep them from Poverty, that they may have no just cause to inflict either punishment.

To which end, our Magistrates ought to take special care that the Laws be put in Execution against *Fore-stallers*, *Reqraters*, *Meal-Men*, and others, who make it their constant practice to buy Corn on the Ground, or at the Farmers Houses, Inns, or Ale-houses, and not in the Market, where the Law obliges them to buy, and not elsewhere, by which they govern the Market, and raise Corn at their pleasure, and so turn God's Blessing intended for the Poor (and which would keep them from evil practices) to their own private gain; which if not prevented by the Magistrates Prudence, it may provoke God to withdraw his Mercies from us, and cause the People through necessities, to do violent and illegal Acts.

And it's evident that this clandestine buying the Corn, by which the Poor are oppress'd, is the occasion of its present dearth.

It plainly appears, and is well known to such as have of late travel'd the Country, that the Dearth doth not proceed from the want of Corn, for the ever was a better Crop than this year hath produced, which we ought to bless God for, as Mr. *Smithy's* most Piously exhorted his Congregation unto, the last Lord's Day.

And it's easie to be demonstrated, that for several years last past, there hath been no other cause of Corn's being dear, but such evil Practices of *fore-stalling the Markets*, making use of the Wars as a pretence for their keeping up their great price of Corn. And considering what encouragement the Farmers have had in paying no Taxes, and the greatness of the price of Corn of late, have caused many thousand Acres of waste Ground to be plow'd up, which never was Tilled before, which hath produced Corn to admiration, and made the Hills and Dales to shew forth God's Mercy to the Poor. And I am sure that half the increase that this year hath produced, will make good the consumption of the whole, and that what the Farmer gets this year if he sell his Wheat at 5s. per Bushel, will make out the loss of the worst Crop that they have had this 20 years past.

I remember

I remember, that at the end of our last unhappy Civil-War, Corn was one year sold for 15s. per Bushel, which according to the present Measure was but 12 shillings a Bushel: at the dearth of which, People were so much concerned, that a Day of Humiliation was kept, and by the care of our then Magistrates (who were Zealous for the Peoples good, in putting the Laws in execution against *Forestallers*, &c. and causing the Corn to be sold in open Market, that the Poor were served before great quantities were sold; by means whereof, and God's Blessing the next years Crop) Corn was sold for 30s. per Bushel by the old Measure, which by the new is but half a crown.

So that it's plainly demonstrated that the present dearth of Corn doth not nor hath not proceeded from the scarcity we have had for many years past. but from our not sufficiently praising God for what we had, and not putting our Laws in Execution against *Forestallers*, &c. who for their filthy Lucre have only enriched themselves, and cruelly caused the Poor to wait in the midst of God's abounding Blessings.

How can any Man imagine that a Poor Man who hath a Wife and 4 or 5 Children, and does earn, when he hath Work, not above 8 or 10s. per Week, can, allowing all other things, subsist, when forced to spend 6s. per Week in Bread, and no less can live, as the price of Bread goes now.

And the illegal practice of these *Forestallers*, &c. are also a very fore occasion to the dearth of *Meal Men*, and *Bakers*, as well as to the Poor who are obliged to buy of them, who are not able to prevent the *Ingrassers* of Corn, but are obliged to buy of them, or at their set-prizes, and so are forced to be their servants, or slaves.

Some Objections Answered, by which they raise the Price of CORN.

Obj. We have had this Harvest bad weather, by which much Corn is spoiled.

Ans. It's both false and frivolous, and only mouthed about to promote their covetous designs, by which they impoverish the People; for there hath been no more rain, as I have heard of, than what hath been beneficial to the Husband-Man, whereby the Corn hath had a convenient time on the ground, the Poor the benefit of the gleanings, and the rain hath also made the ground the better prepared for the ensuing Seed time, which when there is a good Seed time, it seldom or never misses of a good crop to follow.

Obj. They say that Transporting of Corn is another means of the dearth thereof.

Ans. That's as vain as the other, for we have good Laws made against it, if the Magistrates will please to put them in Execution.

Obj. When Corn is dear there is generally a better Trade.

Ans. There is difference when Corn is at three shillings a bushel, and when at six; I will ask any Farmer if Corn when at five or six shillings a bushel, will not one year with another, answer his designs, and with good Husbandry enable him to pay his Landlord, and yield him good profit for his labour, by which he is able to advance those Trades which have a more special dependance upon him, as well as others.

Having thus laid open the misery the Poor do labour under, by the unconscionable In-
hancing the price of Corn by the Evil practice of *Forestallers of Markets*, &c. if Laws already made are not a proper Remedy, I do not doubt but our Government will supply the defects thereof; and if my poor endeavours will any way contribute thereto, I shall not be wanting therein; and am able to demonstrate, that in the worst year of Corn we had in many years past, the Farmer might have been a good gainer at five or six shillings a Bushel, had not the *Forestallers*, *Regrators*, *Meal-Men*, and *Ingrassers of Corn* handled it about the one to the other, till it was one third part dearer than at the first buying of it.

The. Samson.